

Purpose	Provide guidance for effective delivery of services to rural families, including any applicable regulatory requirements
Definition of Rural Families	Rural families include all families living in an unincorporated area or in a city with fewer than 2500 people. See the map on page 5c for specific rural areas in Nebraska.
Cultural, Economic and Social Issues	<p>Rural communities frequently consist of individuals with similar backgrounds in religion, ethnicity, and family.</p> <p>Residents of rural areas experience a strong sense of community. At the same time, they may be isolated from other communities and individuals.</p> <p>Rural residence experience higher poverty rates than those living in urban areas. However, rural families may be more reluctant to accept assistance.</p> <p>Rural residents face more barriers to health care including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Limited financial resourcesb. Inadequate health insurance coveragec. Geographic barriers to health care servicesd. A limited supply of health care providers
Certification Eligibility	Ensure sufficient privacy for applicants when collecting confidential information such as income, medical history, etc.
Food Package	Refer to Volume II of the Nebraska WIC Procedure Manual for more information.
Nutrition/Health Education	Refer to Volume II of the Nebraska WIC Procedure Manual for more information.
Volume: I	Section L: Services For Special Populations
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Because services to rural families may be limited, give careful attention to making referrals for needed services and the availability and location of the services.

Outreach/Referrals

Rural families may not participate in public assistance programs.

Target outreach messages to families not participating in/familiar with public assistance programs.

Emphasize the health care benefits of the WIC Program for individuals and families.

Outreach/referral sources may include local churches, health care providers and locations where health services are provided, community centers and groups, schools and daycare, and other service agencies.

Adaption of Clinic Environment

Select clinic locations familiar to rural residents, and within a reasonable traveling distance.

Set clinic hours at times other than normal business hours (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM) to accommodate rural residents.

Consider seasonal changes in employment when setting clinic hours. Farm families may prefer very early morning or later evening hours during summer and fall.

Reserve appointment slots for certification, education and check pick-up for rural families needing to travel greater distances.

Rural participant not determined to be at high risk should receive priority for bi-monthly issuance of checks.
